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## CHAPTER 2

# COMMAND, CONTROL, AND THE TROOP-LEADING PROCEDURES

*The purpose of command and control is to implement the commander's will in pursuit of the unit's objective. Command and control is both a system and a process; the essential component for both is leadership.*

*This chapter provides techniques and procedures used by infantry platoons, squads, and sections for command and control and communications. It describes troop-leading procedures (TLP), communications in combat, and operation orders. Technical enhancements in an infantry carrier vehicle-equipped platoon provide leaders with several significant improvements in command and control. Even with the technical enhancements, the platoon and squad leaders must use proven techniques of mission tactics and leadership because the vehicles will not always be in close proximity or in a position to assist in communication.*

### Section I. COMMAND AND CONTROL

Command and control (C2) refers to the process of directing, coordinating, and controlling a unit to accomplish a mission. Command and control implement the commander's will in pursuit of the unit's objective. The two components of command and control are the *commander* and the *command and control system*. At platoon level, the *commander* is the platoon leader; the *command and control system* consists of the personnel, information management, procedures, and equipment the platoon leader uses to carry out the operational process (plan, prepare, execute, and assess) within his platoon.

#### 2-1. LEADERSHIP

Leadership means influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish a mission (Figure 2-1, page 2-2). Leadership is the most vital component of command and control.

- a. **Purpose.** Purpose gives soldiers a *reason* to accomplish the mission.
- b. **Direction.** Direction gives them the *means* to accomplish the mission.
- c. **Motivation.** Motivation gives them the *will* to accomplish the mission.
- d. **Communications.** To command or control, leaders *must* communicate with their subordinates. Digital radios represent a significant technical improvement over previous systems. Leaders and soldiers at every level must ensure they know digital radio procedures and how to link digital systems. Soldiers quickly lose these skills, so leaders must constantly work to maintain them through sustainment training.

<b>Leadership:</b> <b>Influencing people to accomplish a mission by providing—</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	The <i>reason</i> to accomplish the mission.
	<b>DIRECTION</b>	The <i>means</i> to accomplish the mission.
	<b>MOTIVATION</b>	The <i>will</i> to accomplish the mission.

**Figure 2-1. Elements of leadership.**

## **2-2. MISSION-ORIENTED COMMAND AND CONTROL**

The mission-oriented command and control method of directing military operations both encourages and helps subordinates to act within the intent and concept of both the battalion and company commanders. Mission-oriented C2 requires that subordinate elements clearly understand the purpose and commander's intent (two levels up). This allows them the freedom to respond, with disciplined initiative, to the changing situation without further guidance. With mission-oriented C2, the platoon leader must--

a. **Expect Uncertainty.** The platoon leader must understand the impact of and the manner in which capability impacts on the environment of combat. Dynamic battle conditions, an (obviously) uncooperative enemy, and the chaos--the noise and confusion--of battle challenge the platoon leader's ability to know what is happening in his immediate area of operations (AO). Through the collection of data and information, he must try to understand and envision the evolving battle beyond his personal knowledge and senses. Using all of his personal, technical, and tactical resources helps him to develop the situation and reduce the "fog of battle." Information alone cannot develop the entire situation. The situation the leader anticipates during the planning phase many times will change, which requires flexible, dynamic leadership during the execution of current operations.

b. **Reduce Leader Intervention.** Control stifles initiative. When soldiers expect the platoon or squad leader to make every decision or initiate every action, they may become reluctant to act. To counter this tendency, the platoon leader must plan and direct operations in a manner that requires a minimum of intervention. The platoon leader must operate on the principle that trained subordinates with a clear understanding of the mission will accomplish the task.

c. **Optimize Planning Time for Subordinates.** The platoon leader must ensure that the timelines he develops for mission planning and preparation provide adequate troop-leading time for the subordinate elements.

d. **Allow Maximum Freedom of Action for Subordinates.** Given the expected battlefield conditions, leaders at every level must avoid unnecessary limits on their soldiers' freedom of action. The leader at the decisive point must have the knowledge, training, and freedom to make the correct choice in support of both the battalion and company commanders' intent. This concept must be emphasized at every opportunity and at every level of leadership. Soldiers win battles. Their leaders can only place them in a position where they can seize the opportunity to do so.

e. **Encourage Cross Talk.** Squad and team leaders sometimes need no guidance from the platoon leader in order to address a change in the situation. In some instances, because of their position on the battlefield, two or more subordinates working together may have on-site information that enhances the platoon leader's understanding of the situation, thus providing the clearest view of what is happening. This becomes critical to

the platoon leader as he develops the tactical solution. This type of problem solving involving direct coordination between subordinate elements is critical to mission-oriented C2.

f. **Lead Well Forward.** The platoon leader positions himself where he can best employ his platoon and make critical decisions to influence the outcome of the fight. He normally chooses a position with the main effort. This way, he can control his elements and, at the same time, support or draw resources from the main effort as needed. From his far forward position, he can use all of the available technology and personal resources to “see” the battlefield. In addition to visual observation, intelligence resources also include radio reports and, if available, information provided via the FBCB2 system. The platoon sergeant is positioned where he can best accomplish his tasks and be able to assume command of the platoon rapidly, if needed.

g. **Maintain the Common Operational Picture.** The commander structures the battlefield based on his intent and on the factors of METT-TC. How he does this affects the platoon leader’s mission planning and his ability to assess the situation and make tactical decisions. The framework of the battlefield can vary from one extreme to the other and with many variations. At one extreme, the battlefield could have obvious front and rear boundaries and closely tied adjacent units. At the other, it could consist of a dispersed, decentralized structure with few secure areas and unit boundaries and no definable front or rear boundary. Maintaining the COP becomes more difficult as the battlefield loses structure. Modern, highly mobile operations involving small forces lend themselves to a less rigid framework. To “see” the battlefield accurately, the platoon leader must know the friendly situation one level higher. Whenever possible, he shares what he knows with the section and squad leaders. The platoon leader also must know the terrain and weather and the enemy situation. He must picture enemy and friendly elements through time as well as picture how the terrain will affect their actions. Analyzing the situation (gaining and understanding the situation)--

- Includes having an understanding of relevant terrain, an understanding of the relationship between friendly and enemy forces, and the ability to correlate battlefield events as they develop.
- Helps leaders form logical conclusions, make decisions that anticipate future events and information, and, if time is short, conduct TLP as fast as possible.
- Provides a basis for platoon leaders, platoon sergeants, section leaders, and squad leaders to make sound, quick, tactical decisions.
- Reduces fratricide.

**NOTE:** The platoon leader must understand the situation and commander’s intent two levels higher than his own. However, he must know the real-time battlefield situation in detail for his immediate higher level (company).

## **Section II. PLANS AND ORDERS**

Plans are the basis for any mission. To develop his plan (concept of the operation), the platoon leader summarizes how best to accomplish his mission within the scope of the commander’s intent two levels up. The platoon leader uses TLP to turn the concept into a fully developed plan and to prepare a concise, accurate OPORD. He assigns additional

tasks (and outlines their purpose) for subordinate elements, allocates available resources, and establishes priorities to make the concept work.

The following discussion covers important aspects of orders development and serves as an introduction to the discussion of the troop-leading procedures. This section focuses on the mission statement and the commander's intent, which provide the doctrinal foundation for the OPORD. It also includes a basic discussion of the three types of orders (warning orders [WARNOs], OPORDs, and FRAGOs) used by the platoon leader. The platoon leader and his subordinates must have a thorough understanding of the building blocks for everything else that he does.

### 2-3. MISSION STATEMENT

The platoon leader uses the mission statement to summarize the upcoming operation. This brief paragraph (sometimes a single sentence) describes the type of operation, the unit's tactical task and purpose, the actions to be taken, and the reasons for these actions. It is written based on the five "Ws:" who (unit), what (tasks), when (date-time group), where (grid location or geographical reference for the area of operations or objective), and why (purpose). The platoon leader must ensure that the mission is thoroughly understood by all leaders and soldiers two echelons down. The following considerations apply in development of the mission statement:

a. **Operations.** Operations are groupings of related activities in four broad categories: offense, defense, stability, and support.

b. **Tasks.** Tactical tasks are specific activities performed by the unit while it is conducting a form of tactical operation or a choice of maneuver. (The title of each task can also be used as an action verb in the unit's mission statement to describe actions during the operation.) Tasks should be definable, attainable, and measurable. Tactical tasks that require specific tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) for the platoon are covered in detail throughout this manual. Figure 2-2 gives examples of tactical tasks the platoon and its subordinate elements may be called upon to conduct. Refer to FM 1-02 (FM 101-5-1) for definition of the tactical task listed in Figure 2-2.

<b>Destroy</b>
<b>Disrupt</b>
<b>Fix</b>
<b>Suppress</b>
<b>Block</b>
<b>Support by fire</b>
<b>Attack by fire</b>
<b>Interdict</b>
<b>Canalize</b>
<b>Seize</b>
<b>Secure</b>
<b>Clear</b>
<b>Isolate</b>
<b>Breach</b>
<b>Follow and support</b>
<b>Follow and assume</b>
<b>Retain</b>
<b>Reduce</b>

Figure 2-2. Examples of tactical tasks.

c. **Purpose.** A simple, clearly stated purpose tells subordinates why the platoon is conducting the mission and how the platoon will operate with or provide support for other units.

d. **Placement in OPORD.** The platoon leader has several options as to where in the OPORD he outlines his subordinates' tasks and purpose. His main concern is that placement of the mission statement should assist subordinate leaders in understanding the task and purpose and each of the five "W" elements exactly. Figure 2-3 shows an example of a mission statement the platoon leader might include in his order:

**EXAMPLE:**

3rd Platoon (Who performs the task?) attacks to seize (What is the task?) the bridge at (NX330159) (Where do they perform the task?) at 040600Z FEB 01 (When do they perform the task) to pass the 1st Platoon (company main effort) on to OBJ BOB (Why must they perform the task?).

***Or, broken out into the five W format:***

Who	3rd Platoon.
What	Seize.
Where	The bridge at (NX330159).
When	At 040600Z FEB 01.
Why	To pass the 1st Platoon (company main effort) on to OBJ BOB.

**Figure 2-3. Example mission statement.**

## 2-4. COMBAT ORDERS

Combat orders are the means by which the platoon leader receives and transmits information from the earliest notification that an operation will occur through the final steps of execution. Warning orders, operations orders, and fragmentary orders are absolutely critical to mission success. In a tactical situation, the platoon leader and subordinate leaders work with combat orders on a daily basis, and they must have precise knowledge of the correct format for each type of order. At the same time, they must ensure that every soldier in the platoon understands how to receive and respond to the various types of orders. The skills associated with orders are highly perishable; therefore, the platoon leader must take every opportunity to train the platoon in the use of combat orders with realistic practice.

a. **Warning Order.** Platoon leaders alert their platoons by using a WARNO during the planning for an operation. Warning orders also initiate the platoon leader's most valuable time management tool--the parallel planning process. The platoon leader may issue a series of warning orders to his subordinate leaders to help them prepare for new missions. The directions and guidelines in the WARNO allow subordinates to begin their own planning and preparation activities.

(1) The content of warning orders is based on two major variables: information available about the upcoming operation and special instructions. The information usually comes from the company commander. The platoon leader wants his subordinates to take appropriate action, so he normally issues his warning orders either as he receives additional orders from the company or as he completes his own analysis of the situation.

(2) In addition to alerting the unit to the upcoming operation, warning orders allow the platoon leader to issue tactical information incrementally and, ultimately, to shorten the length of the actual OPORD. Warning orders do not have a specific format, but one technique to follow is the five-paragraph OPORD format. Table 2-1 shows an example of how the platoon leader might use warning orders to alert the platoon and provide initial planning guidance.

PLATOON LEADER'S ACTION	POSSIBLE CONTENT OF WARNING ORDER	PLATOON LEADER'S PURPOSE
Receive the company warning order	Warning order #1 covers: Security plan. Movement plan. Tentative timeline. Standard drills to be rehearsed.	Prepare squads and vehicles for movement to the tactical assembly area. Obtain map sheets.
Conduct METT-TC analysis	Warning order #2 covers: Friendly situation. Enemy situation. Terrain analysis. Platoon mission.	Initiate squad-level mission analysis. Initiate generic rehearsals (drill- and task-related). Prepare for combat.
Develop a plan	Warning order #3 covers: Concept of the operation. Concept of fires. Subordinate unit tasks and purposes. Updated graphics.	Identify platoon-level reconnaissance requirements. Direct leader's reconnaissance. Prepare for combat.

**Table 2-1. Example of multiple warning orders.**

b. **Operations Order.** The OPORD is the five-paragraph directive issued by a leader to subordinates for the purpose of effecting the coordinated execution of an operation. When time and information are available, the platoon leader will normally issue a complete OPORD as part of his troop-leading procedures; however, after issuing a series of WARNOs, he does not need to repeat information previously covered. He can simply review previously issued information or brief the changes or earlier omissions. He then will have more time to concentrate on visualizing his concept of the fight for his subordinates. As noted in his warning orders, the platoon leader also may issue an execution matrix either to supplement the OPORD or as a tool to aid in the execution of the mission; however, the matrix order technique does not replace a five-paragraph OPORD.

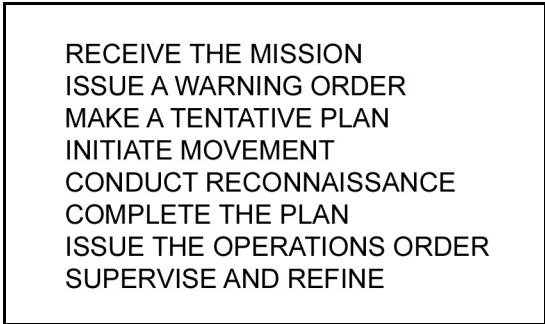
c. **Fragmentary Order.** A FRAGO is a brief oral or written order. A written FRAGO can follow the five-paragraph OPORD structure; however, it includes only the information required for subordinates to accomplish their mission. To enhance understanding of oral FRAGOs, digitally equipped units can quickly develop hasty graphics and transmit digital overlays. The platoon leader uses a FRAGO to--

- Communicate changes in the enemy or friendly situation.
- Task subordinate elements based on changes in the situation.
- Implement timely changes to existing orders.
- Provide pertinent extracts from more detailed orders.

- Provide interim instructions until he can develop a detailed order.
- Specify instructions for subordinates who do not need a complete order.

### Section III. TROOP-LEADING PROCEDURES

The troop-leading procedures begin when the platoon leader receives the first indication of an upcoming mission; they continue throughout the operational process (plan, prepare, execute, and assess). The TLP comprise a sequence of actions (Figure 2-4) that help platoon leaders use available time effectively and efficiently to issue orders and execute tactical operations. TLPs are not a hard and fast set of rules. They are a guide that must be applied consistent with the situation and the experience of the platoon leader and his subordinate leaders. The tasks involved in some actions (such as initiate movement, issue the WARNO, and conduct reconnaissance) may recur several times during the process. The last action (activities associated with supervising and refining the plan) occurs continuously throughout TLP. The following information concerning the TLP assumes that the platoon leader will plan in a time-constrained environment. As such, the suggested techniques are oriented to help a platoon leader quickly develop and issue a combat order.



RECEIVE THE MISSION  
ISSUE A WARNING ORDER  
MAKE A TENTATIVE PLAN  
INITIATE MOVEMENT  
CONDUCT RECONNAISSANCE  
COMPLETE THE PLAN  
ISSUE THE OPERATIONS ORDER  
SUPERVISE AND REFINE

**Figure 2-4. Troop-leading procedures.**

#### **2-5. RECEIVE THE MISSION**

This step begins with the receipt of an initial WARNO from the company. It may begin when the platoon leader receives the commander's OPORD, or it may result from a change in the overall situation. Receipt of mission initiates the planning and preparation process so that the platoon leader can prepare an initial WARNO as quickly as possible. At this stage of the TLP, mission analysis should focus on determining the unit's mission and the amount of available time. For the platoon leader, mission analysis is essentially the analysis of the factors of METT-TC, but he must not become involved in a detailed METT-TC analysis. This will occur after issuing the initial WARNO.

#### **2-6. ISSUE A WARNING ORDER**

After the platoon leader determines the platoon's mission and gauges the time available for planning, preparation, and execution, he immediately issues an oral WARNO to his subordinates. In addition to telling his subordinates of the platoon's new mission, the WARNO also gives them the platoon leader's planning timeline. The platoon leader relays all other instructions or information that he thinks will assist the platoon in preparing for the new mission. Such information includes information about the enemy,

the nature of the overall plan, and specific instructions for preparation. Most importantly, by issuing the initial WARNO as quickly as possible, the platoon leader enables his subordinates to begin their own planning and preparation while he begins to develop the platoon operation order. This is called parallel planning.

## **2-7. MAKE A TENTATIVE PLAN**

After receiving the company OPORD (or FRAGO), the platoon leader develops a tentative plan. The process of developing this plan in a time-constrained environment usually has four steps: mission analysis, course of action development, course of action analysis, and course of action selection. The platoon leader relies heavily on the company commander's METT-TC analysis. This allows the platoon leader to save time by focusing his analysis effort on areas that effect his plan. Typically, a platoon leader will develop one course of action (COA). If more time is available, he may develop more than one. If he develops more than one COA, he will need to compare these COAs and select the best one.

a. **Mission Analysis.** This is a continuous process during the course of the operation. It requires the platoon leader to analyze all the factors of METT-TC in as much depth as time and quality of information will allow. The factors of METT-TC are not always analyzed sequentially. How and when the platoon leader analyzes each factor depends on when information is made available to him. One technique for the analysis is based on the sequence of products that the company commander receives and produces: *mission, terrain and weather, enemy, troops, time, and civil considerations*. The platoon leader can streamline his analysis effort by using his digital capability to access products, produced at the battalion or brigade, to fill in gaps he identifies. As a result of this analysis, the platoon leader must develop significant conclusions about how each element will affect mission accomplishment.

(1) **Analysis of Mission.** Leaders at every echelon must have a clear understanding of the mission, intent, and concept of the operation of the commanders one and two levels higher. Without this understanding, it would be difficult to exercise disciplined initiative. One technique to quickly understand the operation is to draw a simple sketch of the battalion and company's concepts of the operation (if not provided by the commander). The platoon leader now can understand how his platoon is nested into the overall plan, and can capture this understanding in his restated mission statement. The platoon leader will write a restated mission statement using his analyses of these areas: the battalion mission, intent, and concept; the company mission, intent, and concept; identification of specified, implied, and essential tasks; identification of risks; and any constraints.

(a) **Battalion Mission, Intent, and Concept.** The platoon leader must understand the battalion commander's concept of the operation. He identifies the battalion's task and purpose, and how his company is contributing to the battalion's fight. The platoon leader also must understand the battalion commander's intent found in the friendly forces paragraph (paragraph 1b) of the company order.

(b) **Company Mission, Intent, and Concept.** The platoon leader must understand the company's concept of the operation. He identifies the company's task and purpose, as well as his contribution to the company's fight. The platoon leader must clearly understand the commander's intent from the order (paragraphs 2 and 3a). Additionally,



the platoon leader identifies the task, purpose, and disposition for all adjacent maneuver elements under company control.

(c) *Platoon Mission*. The platoon leader finds his platoon's mission in the company's concept of the operation paragraph. The purpose of the main effort platoon usually matches the purpose of the company. Similarly, supporting effort platoons' purposes must relate directly to the purpose of the main effort platoon. The platoon leader must understand how his purpose relates to the other platoons in the company. He determines the platoon's essential tactical task to successfully accomplish his given purpose. Finally, he must understand why the commander gave his platoon a particular tactical task and how it fits into the company's concept of the operation.

(d) *Constraints*. Constraints are restrictions placed on the platoon leader by the commander to dictate action or inaction, thus restricting the freedom of action the platoon leader has for planning by stating the things that must or must not be done. The platoon leader identifies all of the constraints the commander places on the unit's ability to execute its mission. The two types of constraints are: requirements for action (for example, maintain a squad in reserve) and prohibitions of action (for example, do not cross PL BULL until authorized).

(e) *Identification of Tasks*. The platoon leader must identify and understand the tasks required to accomplish the mission. There are three types of tasks: specified, implied and essential.

- **Specified Tasks**. These are tasks specifically assigned to a platoon by the commander. Paragraphs 2 and 3 from the company OPORD state specified tasks. Specified tasks may also be found in annexes and overlays.
- **Implied Tasks**. These are tasks that must be performed to accomplish a specified task, but which are not stated in the OPORD. Implied tasks are derived from a detailed analysis of the OPORD, the enemy situation, the courses of action, and the terrain. Analysis of the platoon's current location in relation to future areas of operation as well as the doctrinal requirements for each specified task also might provide implied tasks. SOP tasks are not considered implied tasks.
- **Essential Tasks**. An essential task is one that must be executed to accomplish the mission derived from a review of the specified and implied tasks.

(f) *Identification of Risks*. Risk is the chance of injury or death for individuals and damage to or loss of vehicles and equipment. Risk, or the potential for risk, is always present in every combat and training situation the platoon faces. Risk management must take place at all levels of the chain of command during every operation; it is an integral part of tactical planning. The platoon leader, his NCOs, and all other platoon soldiers must know how to use risk management, coupled with fratricide avoidance measures, to ensure that the mission is executed in the safest possible environment within mission constraints. (Refer to Appendix C for a detailed discussion of risk management and Appendix D for a discussion of fratricide avoidance.)

(g) *Restated Platoon Mission Statement*. The platoon leader restates his mission statement using the five W's: who, what, when, where, and why. The "who" is the platoon. The "what" is the type of operation and the platoon's essential tactical task. The "when" is given in the OPORD. The "where" is the objective or location taken from the

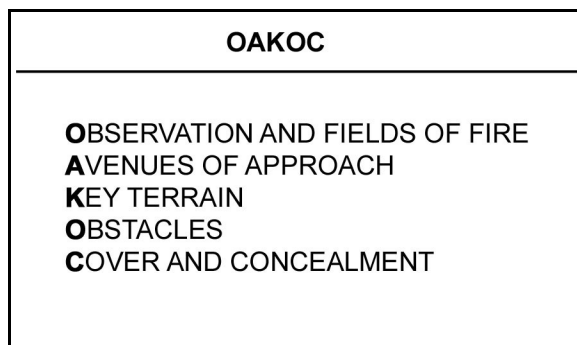
OPORD. The “why” is the purpose for the platoon’s essential tactical task taken from the commander’s concept of the operations paragraph.

(2) ***Analysis of Terrain and Weather.*** The platoon leader must conduct a detailed analysis of the terrain to determine how it will uniquely affect his unit and the enemy he anticipates fighting. The platoon leader must gain an appreciation of the terrain before attempting to develop either enemy or friendly COA. He must exceed merely making observations (for example, this is high ground, this is an avenue of approach); he must arrive at significant conclusions about how the ground will affect the enemy as well as his unit. Because of limited planning time, the platoon leader normally prioritizes his terrain analysis. For example, in the conduct of an assault, his priority may be the area around the objective followed by the platoon’s specific axis leading to the objective.

(a) Terrain mobility is classified in one of three categories.

- Unrestricted. This is terrain free of any movement restrictions; no actions are required to enhance mobility. For mechanized forces, unrestricted terrain is typically flat or moderately sloped, with scattered or widely spaced obstacles such as trees or rocks. Unrestricted terrain generally allows wide maneuver and offers unlimited travel over well-developed road networks. Unrestricted terrain is an advantage in situations requiring rapid movement.
- Restricted. This terrain hinders movement to some degree, and units may need to detour frequently. Restricted terrain may cause difficulty in maintaining optimal speed, moving in some types of combat formations, or transitioning from one formation to another. This terrain typically encompasses moderate to steep slopes or moderate to dense spacing of obstacles such as trees, rocks, or buildings. The terrain may not require additional assets or time to traverse, but it may hinder movement to some degree due to increased security requirements. In instances when security is the paramount concern, both friendly and enemy elements may move in more restricted terrain that may provide more cover and concealment.
- Severely Restricted. This terrain severely hinders or slows movement in combat formations unless some effort is made to enhance mobility. It may require a commitment of engineer forces to improve mobility or a deviation from doctrinal tactics, such as using a column rather than a wedge formation or moving at speeds much slower than otherwise preferred. Severely restricted terrain includes any terrain that requires equipment not organic to the unit to cross (for example, a large body of water and slopes requiring mountaineering equipment).

(b) The military aspects of terrain (OAKOC), Figure 2-5, are used to analyze the ground. The sequence used to analyze the military aspects of terrain can vary. The platoon leader may prefer to determine *Obstacles* first, *Avenues of Approach* second, *Key Terrain* third, *Observation and Fields of Fire* fourth, and *Cover and Concealment* last. For each aspect of terrain, the platoon leader determines its effect on both friendly and enemy forces. These effects translate directly into conclusions that can be applied to either friendly or enemy courses of action.



**Figure 2-5. Military aspects of terrain.**

- Obstacles. The platoon leader first identifies existing and reinforcing obstacles in his AO that limit his mobility with regards to the mission. Existing obstacles are typically natural terrain features present on the battlefield. These may include ravines, gaps or ditches over 3 meters wide, tree stumps and large rocks over 18 inches high, forests with trees 8 inches or greater in diameter and with less than 4 meters between tree, and man-made obstacles such as towns or cities. Reinforcing obstacles are typically man-made obstacles that augment existing obstacles. These may include minefields, antitank ditches, road craters, abatis and log cribs, wire obstacles, and infantry strongpoints. Figure 2-6, page 2-12, lists several offensive and defensive considerations the platoon leader can include in his analysis of obstacles and restricted terrain.

**OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

- How is the enemy using obstacles and restricted terrain features?
- Can I use the ICVs to support dismounted movement?
- What is the composition of the enemy's reinforcing obstacles?
- How will obstacles and terrain affect my movement and or maneuver?
- Where will I need to dismount and lose digital connectivity?
- Where will I need to dismount to avoid enemy direct or indirect fire.
- If necessary, how can the company avoid such features?
- How do we detect and, if desired, bypass the obstacles?
- Where has the enemy positioned weapons to cover the obstacles, and what type of weapons is he using?
- If I must support or execute a breach, where is the expected breach site?

**DEFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

- Where do I want to kill the enemy? Where do I want him to go?
- How will existing obstacles and restricted terrain affect the enemy?
- How can I use these features to force the enemy into my engagement area, deny him an avenue, or disrupt his movement?

**Figure 2-6. Considerations in obstacle and terrain analysis.**

- **Avenues of Approach.** An avenue of approach is an air or ground route of an attacking force leading to its objective or key terrain. For each avenue of approach, the platoon leader determines the type (mounted, dismounted, air, or subterranean), size, and formation and speed of the largest unit that can travel along it; the commander may give him this information. Mounted forces may move on avenues along unrestricted or restricted terrain (or both). Dismounted avenues and avenues used by reconnaissance elements normally include terrain that is restricted and, at times, severely restricted to mounted forces. The terrain analysis also must identify avenues of approach for both friendly and enemy units. Figure 2-7 lists several considerations for avenue of approach analysis.

**OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

- How can I use each avenue of approach to support my movement and or maneuver?
- How will each avenue support movement techniques, formations, and (once we make enemy contact) maneuver?
- Will variations in trafficability or lane width force changes in formations or movement techniques or require defile drills?
- What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of each avenue?
- What are the enemy's likely counterattack routes?
- Do lateral routes exist that we can use to shift to other axes or that the enemy can use to threaten our flanks?

**DEFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

- What are all likely enemy avenues into my sector?
- How can the enemy use each avenue of approach?
- Do lateral routes exist that the enemy can use to threaten our flanks?
- What avenues would support a friendly counterattack?

**Figure 2-7. Considerations in avenue of approach analysis.**

- Key Terrain. Key terrain affords a marked advantage to the combatant who seizes, retains, or controls it. The platoon leader identifies key terrain starting at the objective or main battle area and working backwards to his current position. It is a conclusion rather than an observation. The platoon leader must assess what terrain is key to accomplishing his mission. Key terrain may allow the platoon leader to apply direct fire or achieve observation of the objective (or avenue of approach).
  - An example of key terrain for a platoon could be a tree line on a hillside that provides overwatch of a high-speed avenue of approach. Controlling this tree line may be critical in passing follow-on forces (main effort) to their objective. High ground is not necessarily key terrain. A prominent hilltop that overlooks an avenue of approach and offers clear observation and fields of fire, if it is easily bypassed, is not key terrain.
  - Although unlikely, the platoon leader may identify decisive terrain--key terrain that holds such importance that the seizure, retention, and control of it will be **necessary** for mission accomplishment and may decide the outcome of the battle. A technique for evaluating key terrain is to analyze the following two military aspects of terrain (observation and fields of fire, and cover and concealment) to each piece of key terrain. Figure 2-8, page 2-14, depicts operational considerations to use when analyzing key terrain.

**OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- What terrain is key to the company and to the battalion and why?
- Is the enemy controlling this key terrain?
- What terrain is key to the enemy and why?
- How do I gain or maintain control of key terrain?
- What terrain is key for friendly observation, both for command and control and for calling for fires?

**Figure 2-8. Considerations in key terrain analysis.**

- **Observation and Fields of Fire.** The platoon leader analyzes areas surrounding key terrain, objectives, avenues of approach, and obstacles to determine if they provide clear observation and fields of fire for both friendly and enemy forces. He locates inter-visibility (IV) lines (terrain that inhibits observation from one point to another) that have not been identified by the commander and determines where visual contact between the two forces occurs. When analyzing fields of fire, the platoon leader focuses on both friendly and enemy direct fire capabilities. Additionally, he identifies positions that enable artillery observers to call for indirect fires and permit snipers to engage targets. Figure 2-9 provides considerations for analysis of observation and fields of fire. Whenever possible, the platoon leader conducts a ground reconnaissance from both the friendly and enemy perspective.

**OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

- Are clear observation and fields of fire available on or near the objective for enemy observers and weapon systems?
- Where can the enemy concentrate fires?
- Where is he vulnerable?
- Where are possible SBF or ABF positions for friendly forces?
- Where are the natural TRPs?
- Where do I position indirect fire observers?

**DEFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

- What locations afford clear observation and fields of fire along enemy avenues of approach?
- Where will the enemy set firing lines and or antitank weapons?
- Where will I be unable to mass fires?
- Where is the dead space in my sector? Where am I vulnerable?
- Where are the natural TRPs?
- Where do I position indirect fire observers?

**Figure 2-9. Considerations in analysis of observation and fields of fire.**

- **Cover and Concealment.** Cover is protection from the effects of fires. Concealment is protection from observation but not direct fire or indirect fires. Figure 2-10 provides considerations for analysis of cover and concealment. Consideration of these elements leads the platoon leader to identify areas that

can, at best, achieve both facets. The platoon leader looks at the terrain, foliage, structures, and other features on the key terrain, objective, and avenues of approach to identify sites that offer cover and concealment.

**OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

- What axes afford both clear fields of fire and effective cover and concealment?
- Which terrain provides bounding elements with cover and concealment while facilitating lethality?

**DEFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

- What locations afford effective cover and concealment as well as clear fields of fire?
- How can the enemy use the available cover and concealment?

**Figure 2-10. Considerations in analysis of cover and concealment.**

(c) There are five military aspects of weather:

- Light data.
- Visibility.
- Temperature
- Precipitation
- Winds.

The platoon leader must go beyond merely making observations; he must arrive at significant conclusions about how the weather will affect his platoon and the enemy. He receives conclusions from the commander and identifies his own critical conclusions about the five military aspects of weather. Most importantly, the platoon leader must apply these conclusions when he develops friendly and enemy COAs.

- **Light Data.** The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about beginning morning nautical twilight (BMNT), sunrise (SR), sunset (SS), end of evening nautical twilight (EENT), moonrise (MR), moonset (MS), and percentage of illumination. Some light data considerations are:
  - Will the sun rise behind my attack?
  - How can I take advantage of the limited illumination?
  - How will limited illumination affect friendly and enemy target acquisition?
- **Visibility.** The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about visibility factors (such as fog, smog, and humidity) and battlefield obscurants (such as smoke and dust). Some visibility considerations are:
  - Will the current weather favor the use of smoke to obscure during breaching?
  - Will fog affect friendly and enemy target acquisition?
- **Temperature.** The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about temperature factors (such as high and low temperatures, and infrared crossover times) and battlefield factors (such as use of smoke or chemicals). Some temperature considerations are:

- How will temperature (hot or cold) affect the dismounted rate of march for the platoon?
- How will temperature (hot or cold) affect the soldiers and equipment?
- Will temperatures favor the use of nonpersistent chemicals?
- Precipitation. The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about precipitation factors (such as type, amount, and duration). Some precipitation considerations are:
  - How will precipitation affect mobility?
  - How can precipitation add to the platoon achieving surprise?
- Winds. The platoon leader identifies critical conclusions about wind factors (such as direction and speed). Some wind considerations are:
  - Will wind speed cause smoke to dissipate quickly?
  - Will wind speed and direction favor enemy use of smoke?

(3) ***Analysis of Enemy.*** This step allows the platoon leader to identify the enemy's strength and potential weaknesses or vulnerabilities so that he can exploit them to generate overwhelming combat power in achieving his mission. The platoon leader must understand the assumptions the commander used to portray the enemy's COAs covered in the company's plan. Furthermore, the platoon leader's assumptions about the enemy must be consistent with those of the company commander. To effectively analyze the enemy, the platoon leader must know how the enemy may fight. It is equally important for the platoon leader to understand what is actually known about the enemy as opposed to what is only assumed or templated.

During doctrinal analysis, it is not enough only to know the number and types of vehicles, soldiers, and weapons the enemy has. The platoon leader's analysis must extend down to the individual key weapon system. During stability operations and support operations or small-scale contingency (SSC) operations in an underdeveloped area where little is known about the combatants, it may be difficult to portray or template the enemy doctrinally. In this case, the platoon leader must rely on brigade and battalion analyses funneled through the company commander as well as his own knowledge of recent enemy activities. The platoon leader should consider the following areas as he analyzes the enemy.

(a) ***Composition (Order of Battle).*** The platoon leader's analysis must determine the number and types of enemy vehicles, soldiers, and equipment that could be used against his platoon. He gets this information from the COP or from paragraph 1a of the company OPORD. His analysis also must examine how the enemy organizes for combat to include the possible use of a reserve.

(b) ***Disposition.*** From the commander's information, the platoon leader identifies how the enemy that his platoon will fight is arrayed. Much of this information is gained through the COP and a detailed company OPORD.

(c) ***Strength.*** The platoon leader identifies the strength of the enemy. It is imperative that the platoon leader determines the actual numbers of equipment and personnel that his platoon is expected to fight or that may affect his platoon. Again, much of this information is gained through the COP and a detailed OPORD.

(d) ***Capabilities.*** Based on the commander's assessment and the enemy's doctrine and current location, the platoon leader must determine what the enemy is capable of doing



against his platoon during the mission. Such an analysis must include the planning ranges for each enemy weapons system that the platoon may encounter.

(e) *Anticipated Enemy Courses of Action*. To identify potential enemy COAs, the platoon leader weighs the result of his initial analysis of terrain and weather against the enemy's composition, capabilities, and doctrinal objectives (through information provided via FBCB2), then develops an enemy SITEMP for his portion of the company plan. The end product is a platoon SITEMP, a visual or graphic depiction of how he believes the enemy will fight under the specific conditions expected on the battlefield. Much of this information will be gained from the commander's analysis and understanding of the current enemy and friendly situation.

- Included in this SITEMP is the range fan of the enemy's weapons and any tactical and protective obstacles, either identified or merely templated. Once the SITEMP has been developed it should be transferred to a large-scale sketch to enable subordinates to see the details of the anticipated enemy COA. After the platoon leader briefs the enemy analysis to his subordinates, he must ensure they understand what is known, what is suspected, and what is merely templated (educated guess). The platoon's SITEMP should depict individual soldier and weapons positions and is a refinement of the commander's SITEMP.
- In conjunction with the SITEMP, the platoon leader considers the factors of METT-TC from the enemy's perspective to develop the details of possible enemy COAs. The following points can assist in this process:
  - Understand the enemy's mission. What will the enemy's likely mission be based on enemy doctrine and knowledge of the situation and the enemy's capabilities? This may be difficult to determine if the enemy has no established order of battle. Enemy analysis must consider situational reports of enemy patterns and COP updates. When does the enemy strike, and where? Where does the enemy get logistical support and fire support? What cultural or religious factors are involved?
  - Why is the enemy conducting this operation?
  - What are the enemy's goals?
  - What are the enemy's capabilities?
  - What are the enemy's objectives? Based on the SITEMP and the projected enemy mission, what are the enemy's march objectives (offense) or the terrain or force he intends to protect (defense)? The commander normally provides this information.
  - Terrain and weather. If the enemy is attacking, which avenues will he use to reach his objectives in executing his COAs and why?
  - How will terrain affect his speed and formations?
  - How will he use key terrain and locations with clear observation and fields of fire?

- Does the weather aid or hinder the enemy in accomplishing his mission or does the weather degrade the enemy's weapons or equipment effectiveness?
- Enemy obstacles. These locations, provided by the company commander or obtained from the COP, give the platoon leader insights into how the enemy is trying to accomplish his mission.

(4) **Analysis of Troops.** Perhaps the most critical aspect of mission analysis is determining the combat power potential of one's force. The platoon leader must realistically and unemotionally determine what tasks his soldiers are capable of performing. This analysis includes the troops attached to or in direct support of the platoon. The platoon leader must know the status of his soldiers' experience and training level, and the strengths and weaknesses of his subordinate leaders. His assessment includes knowing the status of his soldiers and their equipment, and it includes understanding the full array of assets that are in support of the platoon such as MGS, snipers, and engineers. For example, how much indirect fire is available and when is it available? For digitally equipped units, this information is gained from the lower TI.

(5) **Analysis of Time.** As addressed in the "receive the mission" TLP, time analysis is a critical aspect to planning, preparation, and execution. Not only must the platoon leader appreciate how much time is available, he must be able to appreciate the time-space aspects of preparing, moving, fighting, and sustaining. He must be able to see his own tasks and enemy actions in relation to time.

(a) He must be able to assess the impact of limited visibility conditions on the troop-leading procedures.

(b) He must know how long it takes to conduct certain tasks such as order preparation, rehearsals, back-briefs, and other time-sensitive preparations for subordinate elements.

(c) He must understand how long it takes to deploy a support-by-fire element, probably the weapons squad (may be the mounted element), and determine the amount of ammunition needed to sustain the support for a specific period of time.

(d) He must know how long it takes to assemble a bangalore torpedo and to breach a wire obstacle.

(e) Most importantly, as events occur the platoon leader must adjust his analysis of time available to him and assess the impact on what he wants to accomplish.

(f) Finally, he must update previous timelines for his subordinates listing all events that affect the platoon.

(6) **Analysis of Civil Considerations.** The commander will provide the platoon leader with civil considerations that may affect the company and platoon missions. The platoon leader also must identify any civil considerations that may affect only his platoon's mission. These may include refugee movement, humanitarian assistance requirements, or specific requirements related to the rules of engagement (ROE) or rules of interaction (ROI).

(7) **Summary of Mission Analysis.** The end result of mission analysis, as done during the formulation of a tentative plan, is a number of insights and conclusions regarding how the factors of METT-TC affect accomplishment of the platoon's mission. From these the platoon leader will develop a COA.

b. **Course of Action Development.** The purpose of COA development is to determine one (or more) way(s) to achieve the mission by applying the overwhelming effects of combat power at the decisive place or time with the least cost in friendly casualties. If time permits, the platoon leader may develop several COAs. The platoon leader makes each COA as detailed as possible to describe clearly how he plans to use his forces to achieve the unit's mission-essential task(s) and purpose consistent with the commander's intent. He focuses on the actions the unit must take at the decisive point and works backward to his start point. A COA should satisfy the criteria listed in Table 2-2.

**NOTE:** The platoon leader should consider (METT-TC dependent) incorporating his squad leaders in COA development. Incorporating the squad leaders in the process may add time to the initial COA development process, but it will save time by increasing their understanding of the platoon's plan.

Suitable	If the COA were successfully executed, would the unit accomplish the mission consistent with the battalion commander's concept and intent?
Feasible	The platoon must have the technical and tactical skill and resources to successfully accomplish the COA. In short, given the enemy situation and terrain, the unit must have the training, equipment, leadership, and rehearsal time necessary to successfully execute the mission.
Distinguishable	If more than one COA is developed, then each COA must be sufficiently different from the others to justify full development and consideration. At platoon level, this is very difficult to accomplish, particularly if the platoon has limited freedom of action.
Complete	The COA must include the operational factors of who, what, when, where, and how. The COA must address the doctrinal aspects of the operation. For example, in the attack against a defending enemy, the COA must cover movement to, deployment against, assault of, and consolidation upon the objective.

**Table 2-2. COA criteria.**

(1) **COA Development Step 1. Analyze Relative Combat Power.** This step compares combat power strengths and weaknesses of both friendly and enemy forces. At the platoon level this should not be a complex process. However, if the platoon is attacking or defending against a force in a situation where the enemy has no order of battle but has exhibited guerrilla- or terrorist-type tactics, it could be difficult. For the platoon leader, it starts by returning to the conclusions the commander arrived at during mission analysis, specifically the conclusions about the enemy's strength, weakness, and vulnerabilities. In short, the platoon leader is trying to see where, when, and how the effects of the platoon's combat power (maneuver, firepower, protection, leadership, and information) can be superior to the enemy's while achieving the mission. This analysis should lead to techniques, procedures, and a potential decisive point that will focus the COA development. (See FM 101-5-1 for the definition of a decisive point.)

(2) **COA Development Step 2. Generate Options.** The platoon leader must first identify the objectives or times at which the unit will mass overwhelming firepower to achieve a specific result (with respect to terrain, enemy, and or time) that will accomplish the platoon's mission. He should take the following action.

(a) *Determine the Doctrinal Requirements.* As the platoon leader begins to develop a COA he should consider, if he has not done so in mission analysis, what doctrine suggests in terms of accomplishing the mission. For example, in an attack of a strongpoint, doctrine outlines several steps: isolate the objective area and the selected breach site, attack to penetrate and seize a foothold in the strongpoint, exploit the penetration, and clear the objective. In this case, doctrine gives the platoon leader a framework to begin developing a way to accomplish the mission.

(b) *Determine the Decisive Point.* The next and most important action is to identify a decisive point in order to progress with COA development. The decisive point may be given to the platoon leader by the company commander or be determined by the platoon leader through his relative combat power analysis.

(c) *Determine the Purpose of Each Element.* Determine the purpose of the subordinate elements starting with the main effort. The main effort's purpose is nested to the platoon's purpose and is achieved at the platoon leader's decisive point. The platoon leader next identifies the purposes of supporting efforts. These purposes are nested to the main effort's purpose by setting the conditions for success of the main effort.

(d) *Determine Tasks of Subordinate Elements.* Starting with the main effort, the platoon leader specifies the essential tactical tasks that will enable the main and supporting efforts to achieve their purpose.

(3) **COA Development Step 3. Array Initial Forces.** The platoon leader next must determine the specific number of squads and weapons necessary to accomplish the mission and provide a basis for development of a scheme of maneuver. He will consider the platoon's restated mission statement, the commander's intent, and the enemy's most probable COA. He should allocate resources to the main effort (at the decisive point) and continue with supporting efforts in descending order of importance to accomplish the tasks and purposes he assigned during Step 2. For example, the main effort in an attack of a strong point may require a rifle squad and an engineer squad to secure a foothold, whereas a support-by-fire force may require the entire weapons squad and the fires from the vehicles if not used to isolate the objective.

(4) **COA Development Step 4. Develop Schemes of Maneuver.** The scheme of maneuver is a description of how the platoon leader envisions his subordinates will accomplish the mission from the start of the operation until its completion. He does this by determining how the achievement of one task will lead to the execution of the next. He clarifies in his mind the best ways to use the available terrain as well as how best to employ the platoon's strengths against the enemy's weaknesses (gained from his relative combat power analysis). This includes the requirements of indirect fire to support the maneuver. The platoon leader then develops the maneuver control measures necessary to enhance understanding of the scheme of maneuver, ensure fratricide avoidance, and to clarify the task and purpose of the main and supporting efforts. (Refer to Appendix D for a detailed discussion of fratricide avoidance.) He also determines the supply and medical evacuation aspects of the COA.

(5) **COA Development Step 5. Assign Headquarters.** The platoon leader assigns specific elements (for example, squads) as the main and supporting efforts. The platoon leader ensures that he has employed every element of the unit and has C2 for each element.

(6) **COA Development Step 6. Prepare COA Statements and Sketches.** The platoon leader's ability to prepare COA sketches and statements will depend on the amount of time available and his skill and experience as a platoon leader. Whenever possible, the platoon leader should prepare a sketch showing the COA. The COA statement is based on the scheme of maneuver the commander has already developed and the platoon leader's situational analysis. It focuses on all significant actions from the start of the COA to its finish. The company commander must provide the platoon and squad leaders his analysis because they have the least amount of time and experience to conduct COA development.

c. **Analysis of COA.** After developing a COA, the platoon leader analyzes it to determine its advantages and disadvantages, to visualize the flow of the battle, and to identify requirements to synchronize actual execution. Typically this is done mentally or during a discussion with the squad leaders, platoon sergeant, or other key personnel. This technique is not complicated, and it facilitates a total understanding of the plan. This is not a rehearsal.

d. **COA Comparison and Selection.** If the platoon leader develops more than one COA, he must compare them by weighing the specific advantages, disadvantages, strengths, and weaknesses of each. These attributes may pertain to the accomplishment of the platoon purpose, the use of terrain, the destruction of the enemy, or any other aspect of the operation that the platoon leader believes is important. The platoon leader uses these factors as his frame of reference in tentatively selecting the best COA. He makes the final selection of a COA based on his own analysis.

## 2-8. INITIATE MOVEMENT

The platoon leader initiates any movement that is necessary to continue preparations or to posture the unit for the operation. This may include movement to an assembly area, battle position, perimeter defense, or attack position; movement of reconnaissance elements; or movement to compute time-distance factors for the unit's mission.

**NOTE:** The following discussion on reconnaissance and the amount or type of reconnaissance conducted must be evaluated by the amount of information needed, the risk to leaders conducting the reconnaissance, and time available, and it must be a coordinated effort with higher command.

## 2-9. CONDUCT RECONNAISSANCE

Even if the platoon leader has made a leader's reconnaissance with the company commander at some point during TLP, he should still conduct a reconnaissance after he has developed his plan. The focus of the reconnaissance is to confirm the priority intelligence requirements (PIR) that support the tentative plan.

a. These PIR are assumptions or critical facts concerning the enemy's location (templated positions) and strength. The PIR also include assumptions about the terrain (to

verify, for example, that a tentative support-by-fire position actually will allow for suppression of the enemy, or to verify the utility of an avenue of approach).

b. The platoon leader may include his subordinate leaders in this reconnaissance (or he may instruct a squad to conduct a reconnaissance patrol with specific objectives). This allows them to see as much of the terrain and enemy as possible. It also helps each leader visualize the plan more clearly.

c. At the platoon level, the leader's reconnaissance may include movement to or beyond a line of departure (LD) or from the forward edge of battle (FEBA) back to and through the engagement area along likely enemy routes. If possible, the platoon leader should select a vantage point that provides the group with the best possible view of the decisive point.

d. In addition to the information available to a digitally-equipped platoon via FBCB2, the platoon leader may also conduct a leader's reconnaissance. Examples of this type of reconnaissance include surveillance of an area by subordinate elements, patrols by infantry squads to determine where the enemy is (and is not) located, and establishment of OPs to gain additional information. If available, the leaders also may conduct the reconnaissance using the tactical unmanned aerial vehicle or video footage provided from helicopter gun cameras. The nature of the reconnaissance, including what it covers and how long it lasts, depends on the tactical situation and the time available. The platoon leader should use the results from the COA development process to identify information and security requirements for the platoon's reconnaissance operations.

## **2-10. COMPLETE THE PLAN**

Completion of the plan includes several actions that transform the commander's intent and concept and the platoon concept into a fully developed platoon OPORD. These actions include preparing overlays, refining the indirect fire list, completing CSS and C2 requirements, as well as updating the tentative plan as a result of the reconnaissance or COP updates. It also allows the platoon leader to prepare the briefing site, briefing medium, and briefing material he will need to present the OPORD to his subordinates. Completing the plan allows the platoon leader to make final coordination with other units or the commander before issuing the OPORD to his subordinates.

## **2-11. ISSUE THE OPERATIONS ORDER**

The OPORD precisely and concisely explains the platoon leader's intent and concept of how he wants the squads and mounted element to accomplish the mission. The OPORD must not contain unnecessary information that could obscure what is essential and important. The platoon leader must ensure his squads and sections know exactly what must be done, when it must be done, and how the platoon must work together to accomplish the mission and stay consistent with the intentions of the commander.

a. Whenever possible, the platoon leader issues the order in person, looking into the eyes of all his soldiers to ensure each leader and soldier understands the mission and what his element must achieve. The platoon leader also uses visual aids, such as sand tables and concept sketches, to depict actions on the objective or movement. (FM 7-8, Chapter 2, discusses techniques for sand-table construction and use.)

b. In digitally-equipped units, the platoon leader may issue the platoon OPORD via FBCB2. Although this method allows for quick dissemination of information and

graphics, it lacks the human contact that allows the platoon leader to feel comfortable that his subordinates clearly understand the plan. Some combination of personal interaction and the FBCB2 is the best solution.

c. The format of the five-paragraph OPORD helps the platoon leader paint a complete picture of all aspects of the operation: terrain, enemy, higher and adjacent friendly units, platoon mission, execution, support, and command. The format also helps him address all relevant details of the operation. Finally, it provides subordinates with a predictable, smooth flow of information from beginning to end.

## 2-12. SUPERVISE AND REFINE

The platoon leader supervises the unit's preparation for combat by conducting confirmation briefs, rehearsals, and inspections.

a. Platoon leaders should conduct a confirmation brief after issuing the oral OPORD to ensure subordinates know the mission, the commander's intent, the concept of the operation, and their assigned tasks. Confirmation briefs can be conducted face to face, by radio, or by FBCB2 (if so equipped), depending on the situation. Face to face is the desired method, because all section and squad leaders are together to resolve questions, and it ensures that each leader knows what the adjacent squad or vehicle is doing.

b. If time permits, the platoon conducts full rehearsals. During the rehearsals, leaders practice sending tactical reports in accordance with the unit's SOP. Reporting before, during, and after contact with the enemy is rehearsed in detail starting with actions on the objective. Rehearsals are not intended to analyze a COA.

(1) The platoon leader uses well-planned, efficiently run rehearsals to accomplish the following:

- Reinforce training and increase proficiency in critical tasks.
- Reveal weaknesses or problems in the plan.
- Integrate the actions of attached elements.
- Confirm coordination requirements between the platoon and adjacent units.
- Improve each soldier's understanding of the concept of the operation, the direct fire plan, anticipated contingencies, and possible actions and reactions for various situations that may arise during the operation.

(2) Rehearsal techniques include:

(a) *Map Rehearsal*. A map rehearsal is usually conducted as part of a confirmation brief involving subordinate leaders or portions of their elements. The leader uses the map and overlay to guide participants as they brief their role in the operation. If necessary, he can use a sketch map. A sketch map provides the same information as a terrain model and can be used at any time.

(b) *Sand Table or Terrain Model*. This reduced-force or full-force technique employs a small-scale sand table or model that depicts graphic control measures and important terrain features for reference and orientation. Participants walk or move "micro" armor around the sand table or model to practice the actions of their own elements or vehicles in relation to other members of the platoon.

(c) *Radio and or Tactical Internet (Digital) Rehearsal*. This is a reduced-force or full-force rehearsal conducted when the situation does not allow the platoon to gather at one location. Subordinate elements check their communications systems and rehearse key elements of the platoon plan.

(d) *Reduced-Force Rehearsal*. In this rehearsal, leaders discuss the mission while moving over key terrain or similar terrain either in vehicles or dismounted.

(e) *Full-Force Mounted and Dismounted Rehearsal*. This technique is used during a full-force rehearsal. Rehearsals begin in good visibility over open terrain and become increasingly realistic until conditions approximate those expected in the area of operations.

**NOTE:** Time permitting, the platoon should conduct a full-force mounted and dismounted rehearsal of the plan. Digitally-equipped units would also rehearse the radio or digital reports required during execution.